

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7689

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 3029

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FOR ATHERTON FROM MURPHY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION ON PEACE PROCESS

REF: STATE 113805,

1. AS INSTRUCTED, HAVE BEEN SITTING TIGHT SINCE MY MEETING WITH DAOUDI LAST SUNDAY. (I HAD TOLD DAOUDI DURING THAT MEETING THAT I MUST HAVE FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE SECRETARY.) DAOUDI HAS NOT ATTEMPTED REACH ME SINCE.

2. SINCE THEN A NEW FACTOR HAS EMERGED IN THE AREA WITH SETTING OF MAY 19 AS THE DATE FOR THE SYRO-EGYPTIAN MEETING AT PRIME MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

3. IT MAY ALSO BE RELEVANT TO NOTE THAT THIS WEEK I HAVE HAD PRODUCTIVE TALKS WITH THREE DIFFERENT CABINET MINISTERS. TUESDAY WITH KHADDAM, WEDNESDAY WITH MINCULTURE KAYYALI AND YESTERDAY WITH DEPPRIMIN FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS HAYDAR. (DAMASCUS 3028). KHADDAM WAS THE LEAST FORTHCOMING ABOUT PROSPECTS OF SYRO-EGYPTIAN RECONCILIATION BUT EVEN HE WAS CIVIL AND PERSONALLY WARM IN OUR DISCUSSIONS ON OTHER ISSUES. (DAMASCUS 2964 AND 2977) WHILE NEITHER KAYYALI NOR HAYDAR FORESAW ANY DRAMATIC BREAKTHROUGHS AHEAD AS A RESULT OF THE RIYADH MEETING THEY WERE BOTH CLEARLY PLEASED THAT IT WAS TO BE HELD.

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4. WHETHER BECAUSE OF THE PROSPECT OF THAT MEETING OR BECAUSE THE SYRIANS GENERALLY ARE FEELING BETTER IN THE WAKE OF LAST SATURDAY'S ELECTION IN BEIRUT, THERE HAS BEEN A NOTICEABLE LESSENING IN ANTI-U.S. MATERIAL IN THE SYRIAN MEDIA. I DON'T SAY THIS PER SE PROMISES A FAVORABLE RECEPTION FOR OUR PRESENTATION ON THE PEACE PROCESS BUT IT DOES PROMPT ME TO ASK WOULD IT NOT BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO HAVE THE SYRIANS AS FULLY BRIEFED AS POSSIBLE ABOUT OUR THINKING BEFORE THEY GET TOGETHER WITH THE EGYPTIANS AT RIYADH? TO ASSURE THEY HAVE TIME TO DIGEST OUR POINTS, BELIEVE I SHOULD TRY TO MAKE PRESENTATION THIS WEEKEND.
MURPHY

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